

Indiana House of Representatives

News and Information

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SMITH: GOV. DANIELS HAS "MONARCHIC MENTALITY"

INDIANAPOLIS -- Looking at the multitude of attempts that Gov. Mitch Daniels is making to grab power, State Rep. Vernon G. Smith (D-Gary) is becoming concerned about the governor's "monarchic" mindset.

"Granted, the executive branch is usually the most powerful of all the branches of government," said Smith. "But that does not mean that the governor can just do away with checks and balances. The governor is displaying a monarchic mentality."

House Bill 1003, which Gov. Daniels openly declared as one of his top priorities, states that the governor is the chairman of the Indiana Economic Development Corporation and that he has the right to choose the corporation's members.

Under this bill, the Indiana Department of Commerce will be absorbed by the Indiana Economic Development Corporation. This would give the governor near total control of economic development and commerce in Indiana.

House Bill 1188, an idea of the governor's, would give the governor the right to choose which state committees and boards should be kept and which should be discarded, without input from the Indiana General Assembly.

Gov. Daniels is also supportive of House Bill 1002, which would create the office of Inspector General. This would essentially give the executive branch power over local prosecutors. This bill would give the governor the ability to pick and choose the members of the State Ethics Commission at will.

In addition, the governor has asked members of 17 influential state committees and boards to submit their resignation in order that he may appoint new members to the board.

"Does Gov. Daniels honestly think no one is going to notice his attempts to consolidate absolute power for himself?" asked Smith. "The governor seems to be getting carried away and is letting the power of his position go to his head. Citizens ought to be concerned about this."

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